
Industry

by Eugene V. Debs

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Benevolence, Sobriety, and Industry, three virtues which ought to be universally practiced, represent the motto of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen. Benevolence and Sobriety, the first two links in this moral chain, have already been elucidated and embellished in these columns; it is now incumbent on us to speak of the infinitely good results that emanate from an industrious life, and the pernicious influences and tendencies of an idle one.

Franklin once said, "Laziness travels so slowly that Poverty soon overtakes him." This aphorism will apply perfectly to many of the victims of poverty. The industrious man is invariably the successful man. When we take a glance at those of our businessmen and mechanics who have risen to an elevated plane of prominence, morally and financially, we see the impress of industry stamped upon their very brows. Industry and morality go hand in hand, whilst idleness is the foster-parent of all the vice, crime, and licentiousness that have cursed this fair earth in all the stages of its modern advanced civilization. Do you know that an industrious man has not time to spare to acquire bad habits? The man of diligence is constantly thinking of his duties and responsibilities. He is patient and untiring in his labors, and while the sweat stands on his brow, he is devising new means by which he can enhance his own welfare, and perpetuate the happiness of his family. Indolence is the great cancer from which all other evils are nourished. It is the fount of crime and immorality. All other vices are subservient to it. Then let us shun laziness, and seek aid and comfort in the realm of industry.

Did it ever occur to you that industry is nearly always well fed and clothed and has a comfortable home? Did you ever notice that the greater part of those who cry, "No work" and "Hard Times," are lazy in the extreme? When a diligent and active man is thrown out of a position, in most instances, he can readily secure another. Men who

employ hired help can generally find room for an applicant who bears the reputation of being industrious. Remember, my friends, that all of the pleasures and comforts of this life must be labored for. Would you enjoy your share of them? Then don't stand idly by and steal from the laurels of others. Associate your name with toil and industry and you yourself will be the source of your happiness.

Our brothers should not only be industrious while out on the road and on duty, but when at home and disengaged, instead of lounging about the roundhouse let them employ their leisure moments making their homes comfortable. Do you ever stop to think how happy your mother or wife would feel if in the spring when the verdure begins to peep above the barren soil and the trees begin to bud and blossom, you would clean the rubbish from the yard and make her a little garden spot? Take a few of the dimes that you spend foolishly and invest them in the purchase of plants and shrubberies and in a little while with the goodwill of your mother, wife, or sister (and they never lack it), you will have an inviting and cheerful homestead. The homes of many men do not blossom with the radiance of happiness; they do not like to spend their leisure time with their families because everything is so cheerless and desolate there. If these very men, instead of helping to build saloons and engaging in the propagation of licentiousness, would spend their time and money, and smiles and stories at home, they would soon have the goodwill and earnest cooperation of their families. The consequence would be a home blessed with joy, from which they would be loth to depart and eager to return. Industry always leads to happiness. In a well-governed family the man earns and the woman saves, and by practicing economy, and being in sympathy with each other, they are certain to prosper.

Brothers, we must be industrious in order to attain the goal for which we are striving. We must be men of exemplary habits, and by laboring zealously for the happiness of our families we will augment our own.

Edited by Tim Davenport

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